regulated in accordance with provisions contained in Chapter XIV of the Railways Act, 1989. The drivers on railways are classified as 'Continuous' and they are statutorily required to work for 54 hours per week on an average in a two weekly period of 14 days. But their rostered hours have been fixed as 52 hours per week on an average in two weeks.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Norms provide for working by the crew beyond the limits prescribed in exceptional exigencies of accidents, floods, agitation, equiprnent failures, etc.

The working of driver of 3009 Up on 14.9.2002 beyond prescribed duty hours was necessitation on account of accident of 2301 Up Rajdhani Express near Rafiganj on 9.9.2002 resulting in complete disruption to traffic, extra stoppages provided en-route and public agitation.

(d) In case of any accident, an inquiry is conducted and responsibility, if any, fixed at appropriate level.

CAG report on signalling and telecommunication

438. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has criticized Railways Department for not giving due importance to the modernisation of Signalling and Telecom; and

(b) if so, the reasons and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes, Sir. The highlights from Chapter 4 of CAG Report No. 9A of 2002 (Railways) in this regard are given in the Statement. (See below)

(b) Signalling and Telecommunication Department have been allotted meager funds in the past. The details of allotment of funds and expenditure in the last 10 years is as below:—

Year	Budget allotment	Expenditure
92-93	147.49	142.53
93-94	156.94	144.93
94-95	176.47	158.50
95-96	275.00	209.00
96-97	256.00	230.00
97-98	201.00	251.73
98-99	336.00	313.60
99-00	348.19	372.80
00-01	374.14	355.38
01-02	386.18	348.41

In 2002-03, allocation for S&T works under S&T Plan Head in 2002-03 has increased to Rs. 275 Crores. This includes allocation of Rs. 505 Crores under Special Railway Safety Fund. Efforts are being made to further increase the outlay under S&T Plan Head.

Statement

Extracts from Report No. 9A of 2002 (Railways)

CHAPTER 4

Modernisation of Signal and Telecommunication System

4. Highlights

- The Standing Committee on Railways (1996) viewed that the modernization of Signalling & Telecommunication System on Railways should be made a thrust area for investment in IXth Plan (1997—2002). However, during the period from 1996-97 to 2000-01, out of the total allocation of Rs. 58010.96 crore on nine Zonal Railways for Grant No. 16—Assets, Acquisition, Construction and Replacement, the allocation for S&T was only Rs. 1482.02 crore, a mere 2.55 per cent.

(Para 6)

- Modernisation of points and signals through Panel Interlocking (PI), Route Relay Interlocking (RRI) and Solid State Interlocking (SSI) had not been completed. Out of 5244 signalling stations, only 1812, 180 and 13 stations respectively were provided with PI, RRI and SSI and 3093 stations were still being operated mechanically. In 431 out of 1075 stations on 'A' route, points and signals are still being operated through mechanical means.

(Para 7.1)

- Out of 6746.73 route Km, automatic signalling was in use only for a limited length *i.e.* in 560.34 route Kms. on 'A' route and work was stated to be in progress on 170 route Kms. No concrete steps had been taken to introduce modern signalling system on remaining 6016.39 route Kms. of 'A' route.

(Para 7.2)

- In 523 station on 'A' route covering 3807.4 route Kms. of five railways, where the utilization of line capacity is more than 100% automatic block signalling has not been provided to de-congest the traffic.

(Para 7.2.1.1)

- Sanction for construction of 3rd line was accorded during the review period in 8 sections on three Zonal Railway at a cost of Rs. 761.34 crores to increase the line capacity. The line capacity increase could have been achieved by provision of automatic block signalling at an estimated cost of Rs. 61.42 crores.

(Para 7.2.1.2)

- Due to line capacity constraints, traffic on 17 routes is being moved through longer routes for more than five years. In respect of 8 routes, rationalization orders were in force for more than 10 years. No efforts to decongest the shortest routes were made by providing automatic block signalling etc.

(Para 7.2.1.3)

- Khanna Accident Inquiry Committee recommended (1998) that block proving axle counter be installed on 'A' route within a time

frame of 3 years. However, only on four Zonal Railways (Central, Northern, South Eastern and Western) 210 block proving axle counters covering 867.52 route kms. on 'A' route had been installed as on 31 March 2001. Even before provision of axle counters on 'A' routes, 418 axle counters were provided at a cost of Rs. 20.75 crore in other than 'A' routes.

(Para 7.4)

- On five Zonal railways, during the review period there were 158480 cases of failures of signalling & telecommunication equipments. 57.21 per cent of the total failures were on Eastern and Northern Railways. The maximum failures were due to failure of signal gears.

(Para 7.6.1)

- The Railway Reforms Committee (RRC) had felt the need of Railways to develop its own infrastructure for telecommunication, independent from BSNL. As on 31.3.01, Railways have leased from BSNL, 43126.93 route kms. for its operational requirement and 17267.31 route kms. for its administrative use.

(Para 8.1 and 8.2)

- Due to lack of clear policy for laying optical fibre cable (OFC), the progress in laying OFC for both its own need and for commercial exploitation was very slow. Out of 15191.83 electrified route kms., OFC have been laid only in 3337.07 route kms. (21.54 per cent) as on 31 March 2001. For 5306.74 electrified route kms., OFC works were in progress.

(Para 8.31)

- Out of 668 sanctioned/on going works, were completed and 476 works were in progress as on 31 March, 2001. Remaining 27 works were dropped/frozen after incurring Rs. 26.73 crores on 20 works.

(Para 9.1)